

NARCOTICS COUNTRY PAPERS - EAST ASIA

Burma

Khmer Republic (Cambodia)

Hong Kong

Republic of Korea

Laos

Malaysia

Philippines

Singapore

Thailand

Republic of Viet-Nam

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BURMA

1. Illicit Drug Problem

Most of Burma's opium is produced in and moved through areas where the Burmese Government control is either very tenuous or non-existent. Production, which is estimated at between 400 and 600 tons annually, is concentrated in mountainous areas of the Shan and the Kachin States where the opium poppy has been grown for at least two centuries. The Burmese Government is denied access to much of this area by ethnic minority or Communist insurgent activities. Opium production and trafficking is not only the principal livelihood of many of the hill peoples in those areas but is also the major source of financial support for several ethnic insurgent groups opposing the Burmese Government.

Our knowledge of the trafficking of opium from Burma is limited by the difficulty of obtaining reliable information on the remote areas of the country. It appears, however, that the highland producers sell their raw opium to itinerant merchants or to insurgent organizations. The bulk of the opium is moved in large, well-protected mule caravans to small processing plants along Burma's border with Laos and Thailand. At least some of the opium is refined into morphine or heroin before being distributed throughout Southeast Asia. Many different, and often opposing groups appear to be involved in the transport of opium or in the protection of the caravans: these include Chinese Irregulars (remnants of Kuomintang troops who were driven out of Yunnan in 1949-50), Shan and Kachin insurgent groups, and freelance Shan Self-Defense Forces which are sometimes allied with the Burmese Government against Communist insurgents but which are not fully under the Government's control.

We have no reliable information on drug abuse in Burma. A United Nations survey team estimated in 1964 that

there were 150,000 opium addicts in all of Burma and two or three times that number of habitual opium users. Most of the addicts are in the Shan or Kachin States where opium has long been used by the hill peoples for medicinal purposes. The abuse of heroin and morphine appear to be extremely rare, though there is marijuana use among some Burmans and Indians in Southern Burma.

2. Drug Control Efforts

The highest levels of the Burmese Government are aware of and are becoming increasingly concerned about the situation. During the past year, the government has increased its efforts to introduce substitute crops among the hill peoples and to harass and curtail trafficking in areas under its control. Unfortunately, the Burmese Government does not have the capability to undertake the massive military efforts which would be necessary to establish effective government control in the Shan and Kachin States.

The Burmese Government adheres to a rigid policy of non-alignment and minimizes its relations with the outside world because of its sensitivity to foreign influences. It is unlikely Burma will change this policy in the foreseeable future. Burma is a signatory of the Single Convention on Narcotics Drugs, but has not worked closely with the United Nations on narcotics matters. A UN survey team has not visited Burma since 1964.

3. U.S. Programs

The United States has no drug control programs in Burma. During the past year, our efforts have been directed at opening channels of communication with Burmese officials at all levels. Our discussions have established a good working relationship between U.S. and Burmese officials, including the highest levels of the Burmese Government. It is hoped these continuing exchanges of views will convince the Burmese of the worldwide concern about drugs and the availability of assistance from several sources. Increased Burmese acceptance of regional and United Nations assistance and cooperation would strengthen its narcotics control efforts.

QUESTION: Can't the United States get the Burmese to crack down on narcotics in Burma?

ANSWER: U.S. influence is very limited in Burma. Trade between the U.S. and Burma is minimal and our presence in the country low. There is only one AID project, funded several years ago and now in its final stages. There is no U.S. Military Assistance Program in Burma.

QUESTION: Could not the U.S. provide enough assistance to give the Burmese a capability to control opium producing and trafficking areas?

ANSWER: Such a program would require large amounts of military assistance over a long period of time with no assurance of success. It is unlikely the Burmese Government would ever consider such a relationship with the U.S. as it would be counter to their basic policy of avoiding close ties with major powers.

QUESTION: Are Burmese officials involved in narcotics?

ANSWER: While there could well be corruption among minor officials and military personnel on the local level, we have no indication the

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KHMER REPUBLIC (CAMBODIA)

1. ILLICIT DRUG PROBLEM

As far as is known, Cambodia produces no opium and processes no opium derivatives. Some marijuana is grown, primarily for local consumption. Although Cambodia has the potential to become a major route for narcotics grown in the "Golden Triangle", it does not serve as a transit point for significant quantities at present. Small amounts of opium are consumed locally.

2. DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS

While Cambodia has laws which prohibit the production, use, sale and transport of narcotics, the internal problem has been negligible and consequently little traditionally has been done to enforce these laws. However, the government has become concerned at the prospect that Cambodia could become a transit route and has taken several steps to deal with this potential problem. On July 23, 1971 a mixed committee from interested ministries was established to coordinate all government programs. Following this initial step, an enforcement unit has been established which is directly responsible to the Prime Minister Delegate. Current efforts are being made to train and equip this organization.

3. U. S. PROGRAMS

U.S. assistance efforts are in an embryonic stage but are moving rapidly. The BNDD Regional Office in Bangkok is in close touch with the Cambodian authorities. Consideration is being given to the provision of vehicles, radios, and laboratory equipment. BNDD expects to provide basic training for the enforcement unit, beginning in March 1972. Additionally, English language training will be given to some Cambodian officials, and a system of rewards for seizures will be established. In summary the Cambodian program is just beginning but is being carried out in a spirit of cooperation and holds considerable promise for the future.

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HONG KONG

1. ILLICIT DRUG PROBLEM

No opium is grown in Hong Kong, but opium, morphine base for use in heroin manufacture, and heroin itself are imported illegally into the Colony. Opium grown in the "Golden Triangle" area of Burma, Laos and Thailand, along with morphine base and some heroin processed in the "Golden Triangle" is funneled down through Thailand and shipped to Hong Kong in Thai fishing trawlers. In addition, a very significant amount of morphine base and heroin is believed to be smuggled into the Colony by air and on ocean-going vessels. Once in the Colony, much of the morphine base is processed into heroin for local consumption.

Hong Kong is believed to have a narcotics addict population of 80,000 (some estimates go as high as 150-200,000) out of a total population of 4 million. Some 10 - 25 percent of the addicts consume opium; most of the rest smoke #3 heroin. Heroin is only rarely injected.

Hong Kong is also believed to have been used as a distribution point for heroin throughout Asia and to North and South America. The Colony's status as a free port has proved advantageous to narcotics traffickers. In addition, as an important financial center in Asia, it is believed that Hong Kong is used as a repository for much of the traffickers' capital.

2. DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS

The Hong Kong Government is carrying out an active narcotics enforcement program. This effort is divided between the Hong Kong Preventive Services (Customs) and the Royal Hong Kong Police, Narcotics Bureau. Given the

open nature of commerce and transportation in the Colony, the two services face tremendous difficulties, but their programs, considered among the leading in Asia, resulted in seizures of 13,500 lbs. of dangerous drugs in 1971, a ten-fold increase over 1970.

The Hong Kong Government also conducts active narcotics publicity campaigns. Moreover, it is active in treatment and rehabilitation areas, including the initiating during the last year of a pilot methadone program. Hong Kong's rehabilitation programs have been creating much interest throughout Southeast Asia, and many foreign officials from that area have visited the Colony to study the facilities and programs.

3. U.S. PROGRAMS

Through representation in the Consulate General of BNDD and Customs agents, the USG maintains close liaison with counterparts in the Hong Kong Government. There is a continual exchange of information, and many seizures and arrests in the Colony have resulted from information developed by US narcotics representatives there. The Consulate General has recently submitted and been authorized to implement a Narcotics Control Action Plan which stresses continued support to the HKG in its enforcement efforts, including close coordination and provision of technical assistance and possibly training.

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QUESTION: Is opium produced in Hong Kong?

ANSWER: No. However opium, morphine base, and heroin are all illegally smuggled into the Colony from the "Golden Triangle" in Thailand, Burma, and Laos.

QUESTION: Are narcotics consumed in the Colony or are they shipped elsewhere?

ANSWER: Both. It is estimated that there are at least 80,000 addicts in Hong Kong, most of whom smoke #3 heroin. Most of the others smoke opium; very little heroin is injected. Hong Kong is also believed to be a distribution point for shipment of narcotics to other points in Asia and to North and South America.

QUESTION: What are we doing about it?

ANSWER: Through close liaison between BNDD and Customs representatives in Hong Kong and their counterparts in the HKG, the US has been able to contribute both information and technical assistance which have led to important seizures and arrests in the Colony. The Hong Kong narcotics programs are considered among the best in Asia and we look forward to continued close coordination.

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REPUBLIC OF KOREA

1. ILLICIT DRUG PROBLEM

Except for occasional efforts to cultivate opium which are almost always detected and squelched by the ROK Government, the raw material for narcotics is not grown in the Republic of Korea. However the Indian hemp plant, which is a source of marijuana, is grown in the ROK. The opium base used in the production of morphine and heroin is smuggled into the ROK from Thailand on vessels that call on Korean ports. Processing of opium into morphine, and of morphine base into heroin, is done on only a very small scale in Korea, generally in isolated rural areas. Finished heroin also comes into Korea by sea after being processed in Hong Kong. There is no serious problem yet regarding smuggling of heroin, morphine base, or opium from the ROK to the U.S.

Barbituates and amphetamines are legally available in Korean drug stores but the sale of LSD is prohibited by ROK law. The U.S. troops in Korea constitute the sole market for marijuana, a market which is now increasing.

Generally conclusions by U.S. and ROK authorities are that there is no illicit drug problem among Koreans and that the problem among American military personnel, although small, is increasing.

2. DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS

The ROK Government enacted a habit-forming drug control law effective November 7, 1970. The law prohibits the possession, use, and sale of marijuana and dangerous drugs. Joint ROK-US drug investigation teams have been formed and maximum investigative efforts have been directed toward reducing illegal drug trafficking throughout Korea. The ROK-US Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) Joint Committee has formed a Subcommittee which is addressing the problem of the sale to, and use by, American troops of narcotics and marijuana. ROK cooperation with U.S. Forces is supplemented by joint ROK-Japan efforts to control drug traffic.

3. U.S. PROGRAMS

Under the Narcotic Control Action plan for Korea, U.S. officials in Seoul are now pursuing the immediate goals of impressing upon ROKG officials the importance of narcotics control and improving information flow and policy coordination with them. An extensive coordination program is underway by the Eighth U.S. Army to upgrade Korean enforcement capabilities. A special narcotics branch directly under the control of the Provost Marshal supervises the narcotics enforcement program in areas under its jurisdiction. U.S. mail is being inspected on a regular basis. Tentative plans are now under consideration for the assignment to Seoul of a Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs officer to assist in these efforts.

KOREA

QUESTION: How serious is the narcotics problem in Korea?

ANSWER: Narcotics is not an important factor in Korean life. However, there is a small but growing problem involving the use of narcotics and dangerous drugs by some of the 43,000 U.S. troops in Korea. So far, the problem has been relatively minor and coordination between the U.S. and ROK governments is helping to keep it at this scale.

QUESTION: How are we working with the Koreans to control this problem?

ANSWER: The ROK-US Status of Forces Agreement Joint Committee has formed a Subcommittee which is coordinating efforts to control the sale to, and use by, American troops of narcotics and dangerous drugs. An extensive coordination program is underway by the Eighth U.S. Army to upgrade enforcement capabilities of the ROK.

QUESTION: Is there a major heroin problem in Korea?

ANSWER: No. So far, use of heroin has been negligible.

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LAOS

1. ILLICIT DRUG PROBLEM

Opium consumption and production have long been tolerated in Laos. Hill tribes with no access to medical treatment have used it to relieve the symptoms of endemic diseases. It was also the only cash crop for many tribes. In Lao society opium addiction is regarded much like alcoholism is in American society. Very little opium is now grown in Laos; less than thirty tons a year. Most of the hill tribes which once produced it have been displaced by North Vietnamese attacks. Nearly all of that still being grown is consumed by the growers. There is no evidence that significant amounts of Lao-grown opium is entering the international traffic. Laos is a conduit for Burmese opium and opium derivatives, including heroin, however. The illicit narcotics are brought into Laos by caravan in the jungle covered Golden Triangle area, where the borders of Laos, Burma and Thailand meet. Some is carried south into Thailand while the rest is smuggled by air to Vientiane and other urban areas enroute to Thailand or South Vietnam. Opium stocks and caravans are protected by paramilitary bands. Communist forces are also present in the area. Numerous uncontrolled landing strips and non-scheduled aircraft movements facilitate smuggling by air. Apparently, no heroin is now being refined in Laos. A major refinery near the border was abandoned or destroyed about the time Laos' first narcotics control law was passed by the National Assembly on September 23, 1971.

2. DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS

The Narcotics Control Law makes any commercial transaction involving opium or its derivatives illegal and for the first time gives Royal Lao Government (RLG) law enforcement agencies a legal basis for interdicting illicit traffic. Strict controls have also been placed on the importation and distribution of acetic anhydride, a chemical required in the heroin refining process. Several seizures of opium, heroin and acetic anhydride have been made and inspection procedures on domestic and international air routes have been tightened up. In the absence of laws forbidding narcotics trafficking, however, RLG law enforcement agencies had not been staffed, trained or equipped to interdict the traffic. Therefore, since passage of the law, the RLG has concentrated on establishing an equivalent of

the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD) to lead and coordinate narcotics control. It is headed by a military officer who reports directly to the Prime Minister and has jurisdiction over civilian and military enforcement efforts. The Lao national police and customs agency have also established special narcotics control units. Their operations are still rudimentary, but intelligence indicates that the flow of opium and heroin through Laos has been seriously curtailed.

3. U.S. PROGRAMS *

The Narcotics Control Law was promulgated with the encouragement and advice of the U.S. Mission in Vientiane. Our programs concentrate on assisting the RLG in establishing effective narcotics control agencies, primarily in the law enforcement area, but also in the field of rehabilitation for Lao addicts. Narcotics enforcement advisors from the BNDD, the Bureau of Customs and USAID's Public Safety Division have been assigned to the U.S. Mission. They are advising and training their Lao counterparts in Vientiane and other key points, including Ban Houei Sai in the Golden Triangle. An American expert in narcotics rehabilitation is advising the Ministry of Health on a pilot rehabilitation project. Specialized equipment will be provided to the new narcotics agencies as their personnel are trained to use it. USAID has proposed a \$722,900 narcotics control project to support the RLG effort in FY 1973.

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QUESTION: What is being done to control the movement of narcotics by air in Laos?

ANSWER : Stringent cargo and baggage inspections are made on aircraft operating under contract to the US Government. The Chief of the Royal Lao Armed Forces has issued a directive forbidding the movement of narcotics on Lao military aircraft. Controls on Lao aircraft are not yet as effective as we and RLG enforcement agencies wish. The problem is complicated by numerous non-scheduled flights and uncontrolled airstrips. The enforcement program is aimed in large part at plugging these channels.

QUESTION: Is there any evidence of high level official collusion with narcotics traffickers?

ANSWER : There have been rumors of involvement by some individuals, but nothing which could be used in legal action.

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MALAYSIA

1. ILLICIT DRUG PROBLEM

Malaysia does not constitute a major illicit drug problem for us at this time. It is not a production area for opium or for significant amounts of marijuana. Malaysia is not a prime area for trafficking of either opium or marijuana. There is some smuggling of opium, morphine base and heroin across the Thailand/Malaysia border, the majority of which is for local consumption rather than for transshipment to other areas.

Historically, opium has been abused by a small percentage of the Chinese population but the abuse of this drug is decreasing as the opium users die. There have been indications during the past year of an increase in the abuse of morphine base and heroin particularly in the area of Penang City and Butterworth. Marijuana has been used for many years and there appears to be a trend towards greater abuse by the younger generation. There have been isolated cases of abuse of stimulant and depressant type drugs by school age youngsters but this has not become a serious problem.

2. DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS

The Government of Malaysia is concerned about the possible increase in drug abuse and has attempted to combat the problem through the Customs Department and Royal Malaysian Police. Customs has primary responsibility for smuggling and more important types of narcotics violations. The Government of Malaysia has cooperated with other countries especially those in Southeast Asia. It is a member of Interpol and a signatory of the United Nations Convention. The GOM is considering establishment of a separate drug agency which will improve narcotics control.

3. U. S. PROGRAMS

The United States has not had any narcotics programs in Malaysia except the recent assignment of two Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD) representatives to the country. A member of the Royal Malaysian Police on a United Nations grant did attend BNDD training sessions in the US during 1969-1970. Our Embassy in Kuala Lumpur reports that the concern of the GOM is evident and their cooperation is excellent.

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PHILIPPINES

1. ILLICIT DRUG PROBLEM

The major drug produced in the country is marijuana. There is no heroin production but it is available as are morphine, amphetamines and barbiturates. Until recently drug abuse has not been considered a serious problem in the Philippines, but it has been growing rapidly in the last two years among Philippine youth. Philippine police officials estimate that 200,000 Filipinos regularly use some form of narcotic or dangerous drugs, of whom 7,000 are opium and heroin addicts. US Navy and Air Force servicemen at the large Clark and Subic Bases provide a continuing but modest demand for almost all varieties of narcotics and dangerous drugs. However, drug use by US military personnel and their dependents in the Philippines is considerably smaller than that among US Forces stationed elsewhere in SEAsia. Drug abuse is not believed to be a major problem in the non-military American community in the Philippines.

2. DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS

The GOP has recently begun to devote intense attention to the drug abuse problem. Last year President Marcos organized an inter-agency council on drug abuse prevention to coordinate the GOP's drug abuse efforts. He has also urged priority enactment of legislation to replace antiquated laws; the proposed legislation would inter alia impose stiffer penalties on drug traffickers. Although law enforcement agencies have greatly increased their drug control activities in the last two years, they are handicapped by lack of trained personnel, funds, and logistical support.

3. US PROGRAMS

The US Mission has established a Drug Abuse Prevention Organization. All elements of the Mission, including BNDD, and representatives of the military commands participate in the organization's work. In addition to coordinating in-house American efforts, the Mission has developed a program to provide assistance to the GOP in the drug abuse field, focusing on improving law enforcement and intelligence capabilities in the areas near US bases. The various military commands also have their own active drug abuse programs focusing on testing, education, and treatment/rehabilitation. The military commands are also working with the local communities to restrict the supply to drugs in the areas around our bases.

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SINGAPORE

1. ILLICIT DRUG PROBLEM

Historically, narcotics in Singapore has been a minimal problem as no production, refining or processing take place in the Republic. (Opium was decreasingly used by old China-born men. Marijuana was used by some Malays and by some westernized Chinese youths.) Recent reports suggest that Singapore may be developing into an international transshipment point, however.

2. DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS

The highest levels of the Singapore Government have assured us of total GOS cooperation in anti-narcotics efforts and welcomed the assignment of two BNDD agents in Singapore. The GOS has pinpointed "ganja" (marijuana) and "MX" pills (methaqualone) as the most commonly abused drugs in the Republic and its anti-drug campaign has to date targeted these drugs.

The Education Ministry is beginning a big drug information campaign. In the health education syllabus for secondary schools, drug abuse will be given major emphasis. Topics on drugs are included already in primary school syllabus. The Ministry has prepared a 13-page publication distributed to teachers providing factual information about major drugs of abuse and useful hints for communicating with students about drug experimentation. Film shows and lectures have been organized for school principals about drugs. The Home Ministry is encouraging the establishment of private public service organizations offering counselling service to drug addicts and to coordinate with PTA groups and other educational associations. Parents have been warned by Home Ministry to pay more attention to their children's activities and friends.

GOS is determined to prevent foreigners importing their drug habits into Singapore. The GOS is even considering setting up tests for suspected addict tourists including urinalysis. Immigration already has expelled one American teenager for drug taking and the GOS is amending its immigration law to provide for the expulsion of families of drug takers as undesirable immigrants.

Singapore is organizing a separate narcotics bureau and the Singapore Police continues intimate cooperation with the Royal Malaysian Police. Singapore is not a signatory to the Single Convention on narcotics drugs but is now preparing the legal basis for accession to the Convention.

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3. U. S. PROGRAMS

Our Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (BNDD) has two agents resident in Singapore. We have given the Singaporeans literature and U.S. laws concerning narcotics and drug abuse. BNDD has offered to train Singapore agents in Washington. Singapore is now considering these offers and our Embassy there has indicated that the U.S. is willing to be helpful as the new Singapore Narcotics Bureau begins operation.

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THAILAND

1. Illicit Drug Problem

Thailand is significant in the illicit drug traffic both as a source of opium (production may be as much as 200 tons per year) and as a conduit for opium, morphine base or heroin from Burma and Laos. The cultivation of opium poppies (illegal in Thailand since 1958) continues in remote hill areas of north Thailand which are not under effective Thai Government control. There are reports of small opium refineries in isolated areas of northern Thailand along the borders of Laos and Burma. Opium derivatives from the refineries in this tri-border area move across Thailand by various means. From Bangkok considerable quantities are sent by fishing trawlers and other ships to Hong Kong. Thirty commercial airlines serve Bangkok and it appears that some tourists and other foreign visitors are involved in narcotic trafficking out of Thailand. We also have reports that some U.S. military personnel and ex-servicemen in Thailand have been smuggling narcotics to South Vietnam, Okinawa and the United States, in some cases through the APO system.

There are no reliable statistics on drug abuse in Thailand. A United Nations survey estimated in 1958 that there were over 100,000 opium users in Thailand. There are indications that heroin and morphine use has increased in recent years particularly among the ethnic Thai youth.

2. Drug Control Efforts

For some years the Thai Government has been engaged in a major effort to settle the Meo hill peoples and to bring them under control. Unfortunately, these RTG efforts have been a major source of Meo resentment toward the Thai and have helped make the Meo receptive to Communist anti-government propaganda and insurgency. In addition to

military efforts to put down the Communist rebellion, the Thai are trying to improve hill tribe welfare. Particularly noteworthy is the interest of the King of Thailand in the welfare of the hill peoples: he is assisting in the development of other cash crops as alternatives to the opium poppy.

Enforcement efforts by the Thai Government are hindered by the impossibility of controlling adequately a long and mountainous border and the complexities of controlling passenger and commercial traffic inside Thailand. In its efforts to control narcotics trafficking, the RTG has initiated a resettlement program for the Chinese Irregular Forces (CIF) under which the CIFs would turn over all their opium stocks to the RTG and cease their involvement with narcotics in return for land upon which to settle. Twenty-six tons of CIF opium valued at nearly \$1 million were burned by the RTG in March 1972.

During the past year, the Thai have increased their efforts in the drug field with U.S. and UN assistance. A US/Thai Memorandum of Understanding was signed in September 1971 providing for increased Thai enforcement capability through U.S. assistance to Thai police and customs officials. The Thai also signed an agreement with the UN in December 1971 establishing a program to deal with the long-range aspects of the drug abuse problem through crop substitution and addict rehabilitation.

3. U.S. Programs

After the US/Thai Memorandum of Understanding was signed, a planning group was formed and has been negotiating specific programs for implementation of the agreement. BNDD has assigned agents in Bangkok and Chiang Mai while U.S. Customs Service personnel are serving in Bangkok. Thai police have recently moved to crack down on local traffickers and several major Thai and American traffickers have been arrested. A promising start has been made and programs begun which have the potential to bring the drug problem under increasing control.

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QUESTION: What about the KMI remnants in North Thailand

and Burma? Are they smuggling opium?

ANSWER: These groups are now known as Chinese irregulars, since the Government of the Republic of China no longer has any control over them. Many of them have been engaged in the opium traffic either in smuggling or in providing convoy protection to the actual traffickers in areas outside the effective control of the Lao, Thai and Burmese governments. The Thai Government has begun a CIF resettlement program to get them out of the opium trade. On March 7, 1972 26 tons of opium given to the Thai in exchange for land was destroyed.

QUESTION: What about corruption by high Thai officials? Are not some key generals and political leaders working with drug traffickers?

ANSWER: Although this is frequently alleged, we have no reliable evidence that it is so.

QUESTION: Is drug abuse a serious problem among U.S. forces in Thailand as it is with our troops in South Vietnam?

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ANSWER: Drug abuse has not been a serious problem among U.S. forces in Thailand although there apparently has been some increase in the use of heroin and other serious drugs during the past two years. Our military authorities in Thailand have increased their enforcement efforts and have expanded their information program on drugs among the units in that country.

QUESTION: Should we cut off aid to the Thai Government if the Thai do not cooperate with us in attacking the narcotics trafficking problem?

ANSWER: The Thai Government has been cooperating with the U.S. for a decade on this problem. Since last fall, this effort has been increased and a number of arrests have resulted. Since our assistance is aimed at strengthening the institutions of the Thai Government and its ability to effectively control its territory, cutting off that aid would hinder, not help accomplish our goals in the narcotics field.

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REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM1. ILLICIT DRUG PROBLEM

Opium has been the drug of choice of Vietnamese and Chinese addicts for years. The opium poppy is grown and processed in Thailand, Laos, and Burma. Transportation has been by various means and routes, overt when prosecution is lax and covert when active. Marijuana is grown in parts of the Mekong Delta and its use has been common since World War II, particularly in French-influenced circles. The country was self-sufficient until demand by U. S. Forces outran supply. Significant imports probably commenced in 1967 or 1968. Heroin was rare in Viet-Nam until 1969 when it began to appear in large quantities in December. It enters the country much the same way as opium and the traffic is probably carried out by the same or similar organizations. Heroin traffic centered almost exclusively on U. S. Forces although there is some evidence that young Vietnamese are beginning to experiment with it. Addiction among U. S. Forces personnel increased rapidly and by the end of 1970 had developed into a first-rate social crisis. LSD, amphetamines, and other hallucinogens have been imported to meet demand by U. S. Forces, but remain relatively unknown to the Vietnamese population.

2. DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS

The Vietnamese Government reacted quickly to the emergence of the serious drug problem and took more immediate steps to control it than any other government in the region. Key officials of Government, down to the provincial level, are involved in anti-narcotics activities. Wholesale transfers of police and customs personnel were made at ports of entry. Perhaps of more importance, the will to prosecute was evident as officials stepped up customs inspections, raids on opium dens, and general harassment of dealers and users. Real efforts were made to make smuggling at Tan Son Nhut more difficult, which resulted in a number of arrests. The U. S. and the GVN continue to work closely on enforcement matters. President Thieu has granted to Vice President Huong by decree, responsibility for anti-corruption matters. Internationally, Viet-Nam has adhered to the 1961 Single Convention on narcotics control. Encouraging as Viet-Nam's recognition of the

problem and dynamic response may be, real progress of a long-term nature is questionable. Smuggling is endemic in the country and real control is unlikely. Nevertheless, the price of hard drugs rose, as have complaints about the difficulty of getting them into Viet-Nam.

3. U.S. PROGRAMS

Five BNDD agents were sent to Viet-Nam to train Vietnamese. USAID cooperated with the Vietnamese Ministry of Health to set up a joint Drug Abuse Commission and are establishing a treatment center for Vietnamese addicts. American intelligence on drug traffic is shared with Vietnamese officials. U. S. customs advisors have spearheaded the effort to halt the flow of narcotics through Tan Son Nhut airport.

The U. S. military has mounted a massive program to combat what is recognized as an enormous threat to our country. Every military man is tested for traces of drugs in his system 48 hours before leaving Viet-Nam for the United States. If traces are found he is held over in Viet-Nam five to seven days while the rehabilitation process is begun. Efforts to prevent U. S. personnel from taking narcotics from Viet-Nam have included frisks, detailed searches, and examination of baggage of departing passengers. An amnesty program was effective in locating a number of users. The drug user identification program now includes random checks of military men throughout the country, as well as the pre-departure check for traces. APO and other transportation facilities have tightened procedures and have had some useful results in interrupting the traffic.

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